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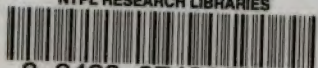
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*The*  
**YELLOW DOG**

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HENRY IRVING DODGE



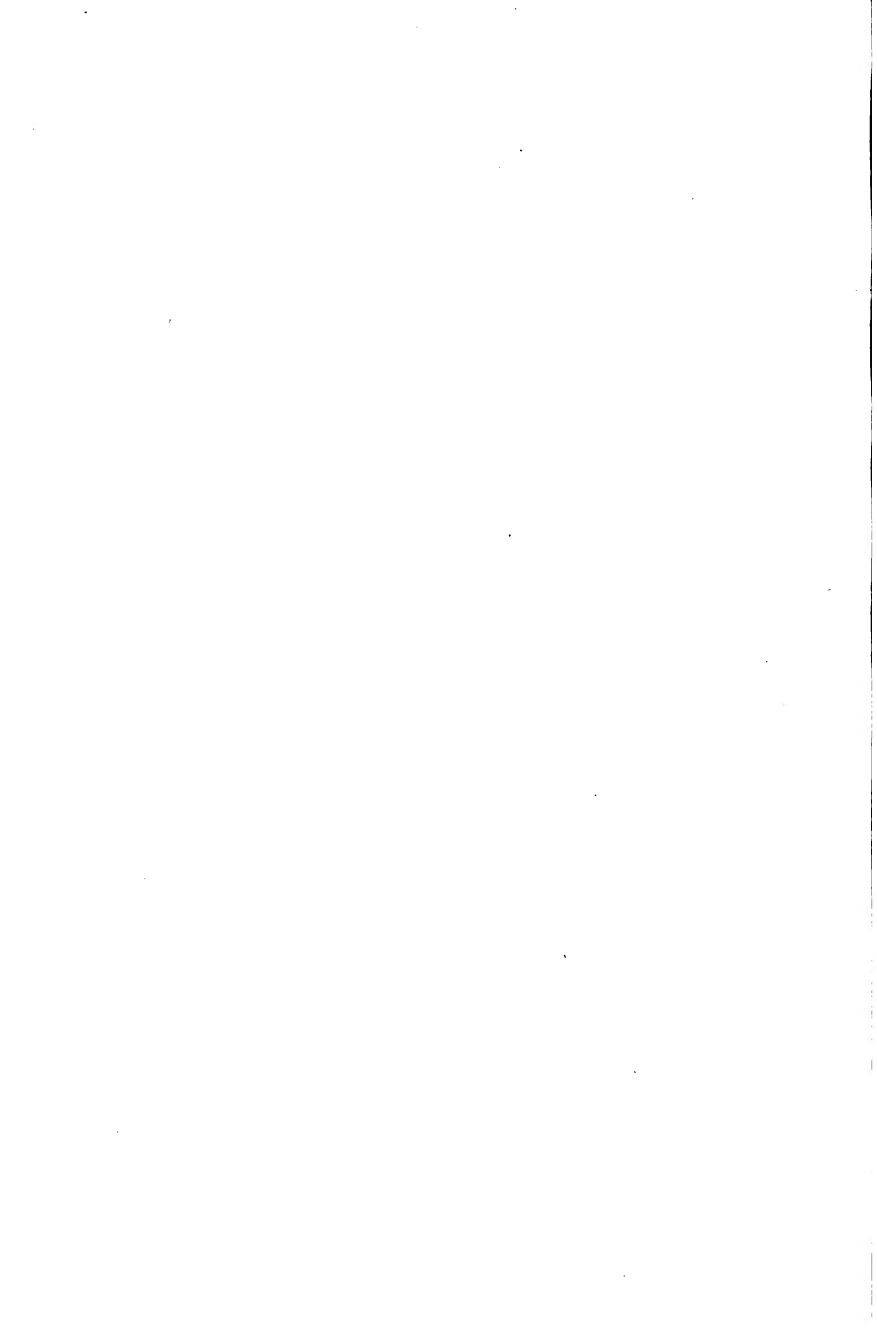
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# THE YELLOW DOG





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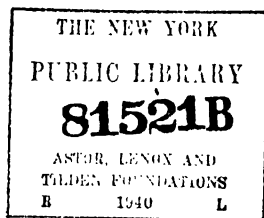
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*Author of "Skinner's Dress Suit"  
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Published May, 1918

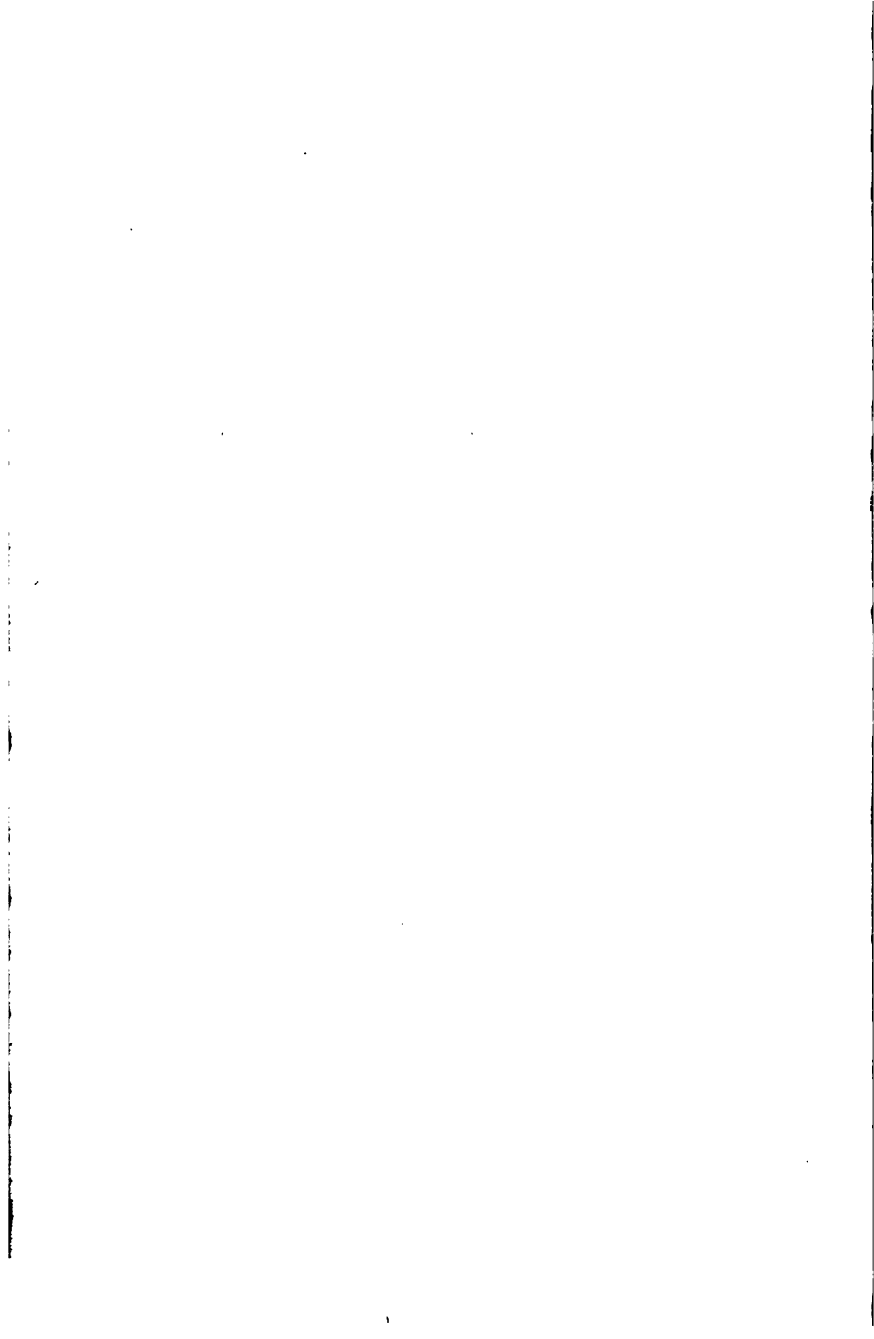
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TO  
MY WIFE  
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR  
THE BEST IN MY WORK



# **THE YELLOW DOG**



## THE YELLOW DOG

**I**T was five o'clock. Walker shut his desk with a bang, stuck the keys in his pocket, and, taking his hat and stick, made his way to the ferry. Walker was weary. He'd been arguing with grouches all day, grouches who kicked because we hadn't gone into the war when Belgium was outraged; grouches who hollered because we hadn't gone in when the *Lusitania* was sunk; and grouches who kicked because we *had* gone in at all. He had been compelled to listen to the dreary talk of our fighting England's war, of its being a rich man's war, of the crime of sending our boys "over there," the constant harping on German efficiency, German invincibility, the preposterous idea of the Kaiser subjugating us as if we were an inferior people—

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and all the rest of the feeble-minded twaddle.

Walker was a sweet-tempered, peace-loving man. He hated argument. His occupation was anything but one involving disputation. For twenty long years it had been his business to write smoothing-out, soft-soap letters to disgruntled customers. He had to meet "all comers" and give them the glad hand. Many a time he wished some grouch good luck when he would liked to have kicked him out. But that wouldn't have been good business.

Before we were in the war Walker assumed a neutrality even if he felt it not. But now that we *were* in he didn't keep his mouth shut any longer. It was a weary business this arguing with fools or having to sustain faltering friends. But the bragging impudence of the Germans didn't offend him half so much as the carping, pin-pricking criticism of the Government and its management by a certain class of Americans. Walker was simply the regulation, first-class Ameri-

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can, who has the welfare of his country at heart, who feels that he owns it—as every good American should—and who hates everybody who hates it.

That evening Walker didn't go into the smoker as usual. Of late there had been too much near-seditious talk in there. And he'd formed the self-tormenting habit of listening for things he didn't want to hear. He found a seat in the day coach and, opening his paper, tried to read. But he was too angry, a kind of general "mad" that had possessed him for some time.

Walker held up his paper and pretended to be reading when he saw A. D. Jones, one of the prominent pessimists, approaching. But there was no escape. Jones took the vacant seat beside him and at once opened fire.

"Walker, haven't you heard a good deal of disgruntled talk lately?"

"No more than usual," said Walker, sourly. He folded his paper and turned for a shot at Jones. "Jones," said he, "I was wondering whether I hadn't got

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to be morbid. I seem to hear it all around me, discontent, carping criticism of the Government. What's the idea?"

Jones looked at Walker significantly. "It's an unpopular war," he said.

"Any war's unpopular with cowards and sneaks," growled Walker. "I can't understand the attitude of some of these fellows. Every time there's a bit of news about labor troubles in England or food shortage in France they seem to take a quiet satisfaction in it."

"You're morbid," observed Jones, for everything just then was squaring with his pessimistic attitude.

"A big battle, even if we lost it, a crack in the nose, wouldn't be so bad," Walker went on. "It would make us mad, rouse us up, stimulate us, any old thing. But it's this rotten, petty little talk, a word here and there, by these sneaks that's the dangerous thing."

"Rats!" said Jones. "Rats! That's just hot air. Doesn't amount to anything."

"Doesn't amount to anything?" Walk-

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er snorted. "It's the continual dropping of water that wears away the rock of faith, that seeps in and rots the moral fiber of the people." He clutched Jones's arm. "There he goes now. Listen."

It was Babbitt talking: Babbitt, the self-exploiter; Babbitt, who didn't care what kind of a light he stood in so long as it was the spotlight.

"I say," Babbitt shouted to the man across the aisle, "what do you think about that transport they sank yesterday? Nine hundred of our boys lost! What do you think *now*?"

"First *I* heard of it," said the man across the aisle.

"It wasn't in the papers, but the rumor was all over the 'Street.'"

The rumor had made a break in the market and Babbitt had made a killing, which softened the effect of the shock to him.

Everybody in that part of the car turned and looked at Babbitt. There were blanched faces and dry lips. Then there was a soft moan, and the crumpled

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form of a little woman in black tumbled into the aisle.

Walker comprehended the whole situation. The coal of resentment that had been smoldering in him ever since he first began to hear slanderous rumors against the Government burst into flame. He saw red—the reddest kind of red. In an instant he crowded by Jones and had Babbitt by the throat. “You yellow dog! You damned yellow dog!” he shouted.

“Wha-what’s the matter with *you?*” gasped Babbitt, pulling back.

“Don’t you know that woman has a son on the way over, and another just drafted?”

“How did *I* know she had sons in the army?”

“How do you know *any* woman hasn’t sons in the army, you yellow dog! You want to assume that they’ve *all* got ’em there before you shoot off your mouth.” Then Walker raised his voice so that everybody might hear. “What you said about that transport being sunk isn’t true.”

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"How did *I* know it wasn't true?"

"All the afternoon papers denied it—a vicious Wall Street lie just to break the market."

"I don't read the afternoon papers," roared Babbitt, reassured as a number of his friends crowded down the aisle.

Jones had picked up the little woman in black and had taken her forward and put her in charge of some sympathetic women there.

"What's the matter?" demanded Charley Billings, pushing his way through the crowd. Billings was the most prominent butter-in of all the commuters.

"This fellow's talking sedition!" shouted Walker. He had loosed his hold of Babbitt's throat, but still gripped his collar.

"You lie! I ain't! I only said what I heard," protested Babbitt. "It was all over the 'Street.'"

"Yes, all the yellow dogs had it."

"He's got a right to talk," said Raymond Blinkensop, a tall, callow youth whose upper teeth protruded, giving him the appearance of chronic *mal de mer*.

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"You lie! He ain't!" shouted Walker, forgetting his manners and his grammar. "He ain't got any right to lie about this Government!"

"Who's lying about the Government?" demanded Walter H. Binns.

"He was, you yellow dog, you!"

"Don't you call *me* a yellow dog," cried Binns, half rising.

"That's about all from you," cried Walker. "If you don't shut up, I'll push your face in. I can lick all you yellow dogs in this car here, one at a time, or all together." The spirit of his athletic boyhood was swelling in him. He wanted to hit somebody—oh, how he wanted to hit somebody! They could see it in his eyes.

Binns subsided.

"But—" gulped Blinkensop.

"No 'buts' from you, you stretched-out insect!" snapped Walker. And Blinkensop thought better of what he was about to say.

"I've got a right to free speech," growled Babbitt, jerking sidewise to disengage Walker's hand from his collar.

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"You haven't any right to free lies. You don't try to find out whether it's true or not; you just lie, lie, lie—anything so long as it's against the Government." He turned to the crowd. "You all do it. You're a lot of yellow dogs." He straightened up and glared at them. "I want to serve notice on you fellows right now—you, Blinkensop; and you, Binns; and you, Billings; and all the rest of you—any one of you that peeps a lie about the Government in my presence—mark! Look!" Walker grabbed Babbitt by the collar and with his open hand struck him a heavy blow on each cheek.

A puffy commuter, who had played bridge with Walker, tried to pacify him. Walker cast him off as he would a canary-bird. "Keep away from me!" he shouted. "This is my fighting day. I'm fighting for Uncle Sam!" Then with old athletic form he pushed the yellow dogs aside and strode up to the end of the car where the little woman in black was being revived. "I want to

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tell you, Mrs. Blakely," he said, gently, "there's nothing in that report. It was only a vicious story put out by the Germans. No transport was sunk. Our boys are all safe on the other side."

But the deadly virus of yellow-dogism had begun to take effect in the little woman in black, as Walker was to know presently.

Walker, when he left the train at Danforth, had the curious feeling that he had suddenly become unpopular. He sensed that the crowd was against him. He was disgusted. Were all these fellows yellow dogs—these men with American names? At the edge of the crowd old Jimmy Beane, commission merchant, linked his arm through Walker's as they started to cross the street. "That was a good one you gave Babbitt, Al."

Beane's indorsement made Walker feel better. After all, there was one man in Danforth who wouldn't stand shame-faced when the old Star-Spangled was sung.

"I've stood about all I can, Jimmy.

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I'm going to make it darned unfashionable to talk sedition when I'm around."

"He claimed he wasn't talking sedition," said Beane, slyly.

"It was sedition camouflaged as rumor."

"You didn't stop to reason that point with him," chuckled Beane.

"Reason? Bah! Jimmy, I've come to realize there's no use arguing with these fellows. You show one of 'em to-day how wrong he is, and to-morrow he'll come at you with some new thing. It isn't what they say, Jimmy, that gets my goat. It's the spirit of the thing. Babbitt spoke as if he were glad. You don't hear that sort of thing among clever, able men. It's the more or less unsuccessful, down-at-the-heel, half-educated, mediocre-minded dubs who will believe anything so long as it squares with their grouch attitude, that talk that way. They forgather and spout calamity—spread an atmosphere of gloom all around."

Beane sighed. "You're right, Al. You can't argue with 'em."

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"Jimmy," said Walker, doubling his fists and speaking with pugnacious resolution, "the only way to get that stuff out of those fellows' heads is to *knock* it out."

"A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

"You can make him shut up, anyhow." Walker lifted his hand and cried, with a gesture of warning: "Jimmy, I tell you the greatest danger to-day isn't the guns of the Kaiser over there; it's the yellow dog over here. He carries poison on the tip of his tongue and he loves to howl everywhere and at all times." Walker grabbed the old man by the arm. "You feel as I do, Jimmy. You've got a regular Lexington and Bunker Hill face."

"You can dig clean through *me* without touching Teuton soil, all right."

"Jimmy, I'm going to stop this yellow-dog business."

"How? Write an article for the *Evening Bulletin*?"

"Bah! What's the use! The papers

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and magazines have been full of it for months, iterating and reiterating the same old thing. But they're not constructive. They do nothing but depress us. There isn't a single one of 'em that's had genius enough even to suggest a remedy, a definite remedy that you can put your finger on. Now, I'm going to do it—somehow."

"Trouble is, no one takes it to himself."

"You've hit it, Jimmy." Then, telling off his words: "Bring—it—home—to—the—individual. Make him realize that *he* is a yellow dog."

"You did that with Babbitt, all right."

"I shut him up, anyhow," commented Walker, grimly.

"Pity you couldn't choke 'em all off that way."

"Any yellow dog 'll lie, belly up, and keep still as long as you've got your foot on his neck. But one man can only keep his foot on the neck of one yellow dog at a time, and he can't do *that* forever. Trouble is, Jimmy, yellow-dogism is all over the country. To combat it we must

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find an agent as ubiquitous as the house-fly."

"But how to do it? That's the rub."

"If we can only find a cure for this community, we'll have a cure for the whole nation. For a town is only a nation in miniature. Jimmy, the blood of this nation is full of white corpuscles, non-resisting yellow dogs. Red corpuscles is what we need, blood policemen." Walker laughed. "Only two hours ago *I* was a white corpuscle. Now I'm a red one."

When they shook hands at the gate Beane said: "Al, you've raised my hopes again. I'd begun to think there wasn't a white man in Danforth. It's all rot, I know, but I'm obsessed."

"My hat's in the ring, Jimmy—all comers!" exclaimed Walker. "All comers!"

Beane turned and looked at his companion with his jaw dropped slightly. "What's come over you, Al?"

"I dunno."

"Well, whatever it is, it's good."

The slap in the face that Walker gave

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Babbitt changed Walker's very nature. It instantly converted him from a patiently passive to an actively militant man. The Yankee coal in him had burst into flame and was consuming him. He had suddenly become the sole owner and guardian of the U. S. A. He had with his fists, thank God, proclaimed himself the enemy of all yellow dogs. He would fight yellow-dogism first, last, and all the time. He would swat it every time it poked its head up in his presence. He had silenced a few. But that was not enough. The new spirit that had taken possession of him had given him powerful initiative. He would carry the war into the enemy's camp. He didn't know just how—but he'd do it. Our boys were "over there"—that meant a heap to him. He would show 'em that it meant a heap to be "over here."

That evening after dinner Walker went to his library, seated himself before the grate fire, and, lighting his pipe, tried to think out a cure for the nation against yellow-dogism. As the result of his pro-

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longed and profound meditations he reached three definite conclusions: There was no use in argument; that wouldn't do it. There was no use in writing articles; that wouldn't do it. There was only one thing to do—bring it home to the individual that he was a yellow dog, and bring it home hard.

Night after night Walker, with the help of his good pipe, operated his thinking-machine, and his thinking-machine was pointed in the direction of yellow-dogism and was gaining headway all the time. The first thing, he thought, was to get at the cause of this national malady. What was the reason of the pessimistic attitude of these men with good American names? Why did they persist in sowing the seeds of doubt? Why did they continually harp on German organization? Why did they say anything good about the enemy whom they hated, just as he hated, and were quite as determined to crush? Were they doing it consciously or unconsciously? They weren't vicious men, although the effect of their attitude was

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vicious. If one had called them unpatriotic, they would have resented it hotly. Then they must be doing it unconsciously. Admitting that, they must be acting under an influence outside of themselves; they must unwittingly be lending themselves to a sinister purpose.

Was it possible, after all, Walker wondered, that some German system had insidiously produced this rotten moral attitude in Danforth? The longer he pondered the more he realized how many German interests there were in this country. Many of his friends, he had long known, were influenced, directly or indirectly, by German affiliations. Every one suspected that the air was full of subtle Teutonic propaganda. Was there, after all, an organized system operating in every community? As a basis of calculation, Walker assumed that there was such a system. Its agents were everywhere. Obviously it would be quite as impossible to run them all down as it would be to run down the germs of a disease that might be in the air. But it

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would be possible to treat the soil in which these seeds of sedition were sown so as to render it incompatible with the growth and development and flowering of such seeds. In brief, he must sterilize the soil.

On a quiet side street in Danforth, in a house of moderate proportions, lived a man who spoke with a broad Scotch dialect, so Scotchy, in fact, as to be almost unintelligible whenever he chose that it should be so. This man was known as Mr. Alexander Cummings. He was a bachelor, a man of culture, who lived alone with one servant, an inarticulate old Chinaman with very large ears. Cummings rarely went out in the evening and was said to devote all his leisure moments to reading. In fact, the one notable feature of the establishment was the library.

Nobody seemed to know exactly what Cummings's business was. He had a small, dingy office on Beaver Street, not far from the Produce Exchange, to and

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from which he commuted every day. His business card bore the legend: "Commission Broker." In Cummings's office was a section of a rail, with fish plates and spikes, and on a shelf some tall phials containing thickish, vari-colored oils.

Three years before, a destitute German, Carl Schneider, had appeared in the office of Cummings, told a pitiful story of the sufferings of his wife and two small children, and made a plea for assistance. Cummings sized the man up, found him to be well educated, and gave him a job. For six months Cummings watched Schneider, and presently satisfied himself that he was discreet. For in all that time, although he was kept assiduously at work copying old and apparently useless records, Schneider never once intimated that he'd like to know the nature of Cummings's business.

One day Cummings said to Schneider, "I can't keep you here any longer just copying those old records." Then, in answer to Schneider's look of dismay: "But there's a chance for you out in

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Danforth, keeping the books in the grocery-store of a friend of mine. I've already spoken for the job for you. There's a little house down the street from me that would just suit you and your wife. You can have it at a nominal rent. One thing," Cummings suggested, "you'd better change your name from Carl Schneider to Charles Snyder." He paused, then: "They don't like Germans out there. But so long as you mind your business they'll let you alone. Is it all right?"

"Really, I'm very thankful. I—I—I don't quite like the idea of changing my name," was as near a protest as Schneider'd ever made.

"It's for the Fatherland. Don't you understand?" Then: "No better place for a good-looking young German than a corner grocery-store where foolish, impressionable women congregate and gossip."

Schneider looked at Cummings significantly.

Cummings opened his pocket-book.

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"I have learned that you are a discreet man, Schneider. Here's my card."

Schneider took the bit of pasteboard. "Rudolf Kreischer," he read aloud. Then, comprehending, "Why did you take the name Alexander Cummings?"

Cummings puffed his pipe for a moment, then: "It too often happens that you scratch a Williams and find a Schmitt. But who, my friend, would expect to lift up a Scotch blanket and find a Dutchman under it?"

"But how did you acquire your wonderful dialect?"

Cummings ignored the question. "I have work for you in Danforth—work that I cannot do myself." Laughingly: "For some time I have been engaged in placing clerks in the grocery-stores of suburban towns."

Schneider nodded.

"The soil out there is rich in fools, as it is in most American towns," Cummings went on. "I've studied it. I can direct you how, when, and where to sow the seed."

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And so Mr. Charles Snyder and his small family moved to Danforth. And Snyder, being clever and obsequious, a non-obtrusive, likable fellow, under the direction of Cummings became a most assiduous, subtle, and effective sower of the seed of sedition. He was adroit in the selection of his audience. To women with sons of draftable age he hinted at the prowess of the submarine. Or to parsimonious men he dilated upon the wonderful chance that the low price of securities on the market offered for immensely profitable investment.

"Of course," he would say, with a shrug of the shoulders, "it's one's patriotic duty to buy Liberty Bonds, but really the Government doesn't expect one to put all his money in four-per-cents. when he can get gilt edges that pay him ten and twelve." And so on, down the whole gamut.

On the evening of the day of the smiting of the cheeks of Babbitt by Walker Snyder called on Cummings.

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"I have something most interesting to relate, Mr. Cummings."

"Proceed, my friend."

In a few excited words Snyder told Cummings what had taken place between Walker and Babbitt. But, to his surprise, Cummings betrayed no agitation. Instead, he merely puffed his pipe and grunted.

"He called him a yellow dog," Snyder added.

"So he *was* a yellow dog." Then, after reflection: "A very good term. If they weren't yellow dogs, my friend, our work would go for nothing. We can't distribute Germans all over the United States, and if we could we couldn't speak through them. People would be suspicious. We must speak through their own people, whose motives are beyond question—their yellow dogs, as Walker so aptly calls them. They're fools; that's why they *are* yellow dogs. Great soil in which to sow distrust. See how it flourishes, multiplies, like this. One fool knows it." He held up one

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finger. "Two fools know it." He held up two fingers. "What does that stand for, two fingers?"

Snyder laughed. "Eleven."

"Good! Three fools know it." He held up another finger. "What does that stand for, three fingers?"

"A hundred and eleven," cried Snyder, gleefully.

"That's the rate at which we are—with the help of the yellow dogs—making soldiers for the Kaiser over here."

"Mr. Cummings, you're a genius."

"So you see, my friend, every fool we can get to use as a mouthpiece against Uncle Sam is a trumpet in favor of the Kaiser."

"But *all* Americans are not fools," Snyder protested.

Cummings softly puffed his pipe. "No-o, not all. But we don't talk through the mouths of the smart ones. We whine and growl and bark through the yellow dogs." Cummings paused, then: "You see, my friend, war is not only a matter of bullets and bayonets; it's

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a matter of psychology. The most important thing is the attitude of the people." He pointed his finger at Snyder. "That's why the Americans are more eager for news of strikes in Vienna, bread riots in Berlin, the talk in the Reichstag, than they are in the booming of cannon and the sinking of tank ships. Our job now is to keep on boring holes in the foundation of the confidence of the people through the yellow dogs." He threw back his head and laughed. "Yellow dogs—fools. One fool contaminates another fool, my friend. The fools greatly outnumber the smart men, and every fool has a vote. It is on the votes of fools that the Congressman must depend for his election—it is to the fools he must cater. If the fools distrust the Government, the Congressman will be weak-kneed in his support. Or, to please his fools, he will bring up charges of incompetence, extravagance. He will seek to tie the hands of the Administration. For he cares for nothing but his own miserable hide."

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Cummings paused. Then: "You see, my friend, we cultivate all kinds of soil." He chuckled. "There's the yellow dog that hates the rich. You'll hear him howl on the street corners from a soap-box. He is a fool yellow dog, otherwise he'd be rich himself. He is utterly insincere. He envies the very man he damns. We get him to yelp to his down-at-the-heel, greasy auditors: 'A rich man's war!' 'John D. has already made ninety-five millions out of the war!' 'Young John D. is in the Y. M. C. A. so he can keep an eye on the main chance to make more!' Or they say: 'Colonel Vanderbilt loaned France forty millions. And he's in the army to keep an eye on his money!' My friend, it is to laugh. You wouldn't believe it, but nothing is too slushy for these yellow dogs to believe so long as it's against the Administration."

Cummings held up his finger. "And, mark you, the dirty crowds in the parks are not the only fools. When the war started I planted one of my men in a shipyard as timekeeper. He had been

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over here long enough to camouflage as an American." He chuckled. "Gad! what a handy word that is—'camouflage.' My timekeeper saw those boys were inclined to strike. The only thing that stood in the way was their patriotism. So he held up the bugaboo that all working-men hate—Wall Street. It was a Wall Street war, he urged. The working-man was being exploited for the benefit of the stock-gamblers. The munitions-makers were rolling up gold by the ton." Cummings laughed. "So they are, but the Government takes it all away from them to fight this war. We don't shout that through a megaphone. What my timekeeper said didn't actually cause the strike, but it weakened the position of the stanch Americans who were opposing it."

Cummings paused. "Hand me a match." He relighted his pipe, then proceeded: "As to the selective distribution of the seed, my good friend, did you ever study simple business psychology? Yes? We apply it here.

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For instance, we wouldn't go to a blacksmith shop to sell a piece of silk. By analogy, we wouldn't go to Wall Street to preach altruism. Wall Street is a fertile field for our efforts. That's where we sow the seeds of suspicion. The grouch weed has been flourishing there for generations. No matter which way the market goes, somebody's hurt. It keeps grinding out depression. If the market falls, we hint that Baruch is 'short.' If it advances sharply and catches the bears, we urge as a reason the silly old chestnut that McAdoo was put in charge of railroads by Wilson just so he could manipulate the stock-market for the benefit of the American royal family. And the yellow dogs of the 'Street' carry it to their homes and spread it among their neighbors."

"But once the Americans *do* realize they're fools, Mr. Cummings?"

"Once they realize it, my good friend, you and I will have to seek new fields of endeavor," said Cummings, quietly.

"But don't worry. Nobody's had wit

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enough yet to scheme out a way to make them realize. And, remember, Yankee egotism, which we have so assiduously flattered and developed, is our great security."

There was one thing Mr. Rudolf Kreischer—alias Cummings—had failed to grasp in the American character. For, like most Germans, he had judged Jonathan by Fritz. There's an essential difference. Fritz has his thinking done for him by *Herr Professor*. Jonathan does his thinking for himself. When Jonathan first realized the menace of the Indians, being in an almost invisible minority, he didn't try to overwhelm them with much noise and bluster. He simply put on his thinking-cap. A nation of more than a hundred million free people, wealthy beyond the dreams of a Croesus, and other things too numerous to mention, was the result of Jonathan's putting on his thinking-cap.

Jonathan's thinking isn't done by one man or a handful of men. Everybody schemes, invents. There isn't a village

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in the country that hasn't some genius who thinks he can run the war. Every normal boy thinks he has something on Edison or Graham Bell. Local recognition often makes him a "smart Aleck." But some of the most enterprising spirits we have started in by being smart Alecks. So, when the country wakes up and gets a move on, it does so on the multiple-unit idea. Every car has its own motor. That's why it's dangerous to tackle a good-natured people that habitually wears its thinking-cap.

While Kreischer—alias Cummings—was congratulating himself that his system of pin-prick propaganda was far too subtle to be traced to any one of its innumerable and elusive sources, there was another shrewd brain, not more than four blocks away, that was consciously and subconsciously seeking to evolve a scheme to locate the insect that was laying the propaganda egg and "swat" it.

As a boy, Walker, even then an economist, used to wonder why the titanic energy of the air should be put to

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no more dignified purpose than running a few foolish windmills, pulling up a bucket of water now and then for a farm-hand. Why not make the wind plow the fields instead of rippling the grass that doesn't need to be rippled? And the sea, hammering the coast with the force of ten thousand Niagaras to no useful purpose! Why shouldn't it run electric plants all over the land?

"Isn't there some human force," Walker wondered, "some force as ubiquitous as the wind, as restless as the sea, that's going to waste, that only needs direction, that can be used against this wide-spread disease—yellow-dogism?"

Walker was getting warmer every minute, like the boy in hide and seek, only he didn't know it. But great discoveries are often the result of accident.

And then the blow fell. Jimmy Blakely, Widow Blakely's youngest, had been tried by court martial and sent to prison as a deserter. The fact brought the war home with awful force to Danforth, for young Blakely had been a great favorite.

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"It's yellow-dogism that did it," growled Walker when he heard of it. "The whole thing is yellow-dogism." Right after dinner he took his hat and stick and quickly made his way to the home of the little widow. She let him in without a word.

"I know you've come to ask me to tell you all about it," she said. "But I can't—I can't." She broke down and sobbed.

Walker put a comforting arm around her shoulder and led her to a chair. "I've come to tell *you* all about it."

She looked at him, surprised.

"Charley is 'over there' doing fine work for Uncle Sam," he began, "but you were worried about him. And you knew Jimmy'd have to go, and you've had the submarine nightmare, as all mothers have. And what Babbitt said on the train that day scared you to death."

"It did," she broke in.

"You made Jimmy run away, didn't you?"

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She hesitated.

"Jimmy was too brave a boy—"

"Yes, I did, I did."

"Let me tell the people here that Jimmy ran away just to spare you. Then they won't think he was afraid to fight. That's how it was?"

"You're right," she said.

"Why didn't you testify to that before the court martial?"

"Jimmy was afraid it would get me into trouble. But I told him I didn't mind that. Then he told me they'd think *he* was trying to put the blame on me and that it would go harder with him."

"Will you let me tell them that?"

She hesitated.

"It'll set Jimmy right before the people."

"Yes, do it! Do it!"

The same evening Cummings and Snyder had a bottle of wine together. "You see, my friend," exclaimed Cummings, joyfully; "you see how it works. There was nothing to the story we got

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out about the sending of that transport to the bottom, not a thing—hot air. Yet it was grabbed at by hysterical men and women and the result is very tangible. A deserter. A man in prison. His friends will resent it. Multiply the case of young Blakely many, many times, multiply the destructive influence of his friends.” He held up his fingers. “One—eleven—a hundred and eleven. It will sap the life blood of Uncle Sam, and every drop of blood you take from Uncle Sam goes into the veins of the Kaiser.”

When Walker got home after his interview with Mrs. Blakely, he took his pipe and tried to forget his anger in the pages of a detective story. He had reached a dramatic climax and his nerves were at high tension when there was a quick, sharp ring at the door-bell. He went to the door and opened it with a jerk. But there was no one there. “Curious,” he thought. He went back to the library and resumed the story. Presently he heard the next-door neighbor’s bell, and

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the sound of quick, light footsteps. He heard his neighbor come to the door. There were no voices. The door closed with a bang.

Walker took his stick and hat and went out the rear way. He walked around to the front porch and halted behind a great bush. In a few moments he saw three small figures emerge from the shadow of a big tree and make their way to the front gate of his neighbor on the left. Cautiously the leader mounted the steps, tugged vigorously at the bell, and quickly retreated. The three boys then hid behind another tree. And Walker, not far away, recognized in the leader the unmistakable figure of "Nosey" White. Neighbor to the left came to the door, peered out into the darkness, muttered something profane, and slammed the door. After much gleeful giggling the three boys came out from their hiding-place, stole down the street and into another front yard a block away.

Walker went into the library and picked up his book. But he'd lost in-

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terest in the story. His thoughts were with the small boy. He began to reminisce. He used to play tick-tack on the local shopkeeper's windows. A bent pin, a string, and a pebble. Gosh! How mad those shopkeepers used to get. "For devilish ingenuity of the teasing kind give me the small boy," Walker mused. "Everywhere and always full of mischief. Everywhere and all at once," he said, aloud. He sat up with a jerk. "By Jove! I've got it! The small boy—the red corpuscle of the country's blood—the universal policeman—everywhere and all at once!" He puffed his pipe excitedly.

For half an hour Walker sat pondering, then he took his hat and stick, proceeded to Main Street, thence around the corner to the moving-picture show. Once there, he was closeted for fifteen minutes with Hogan, the proprietor, and during that fifteen minutes Walker made certain arrangements satisfactory to both.

The next morning on his way to the train Walker stopped at the news-stand run by the father of Nosey White. As

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he'd expected, the young hopeful was there in attendance at the candy department.

"Alexander," said Walker (Alexander was Nosey's Sunday-school name). He noticed a furtive look in Nosey's eyes and a tendency to move away, and hastened to reassure him. "Alexander, I'm going to have a moving-picture show at my house to-night, a detective story. How would you like to see it?"

"Fine," said Nosey.

"I want you to bring all your friends. You can let them think it's your party, if you like, only bring 'em all."

"Yes, sir," said Nosey.

Nosey, having always regarded Walker as a gentle, retiring, serious-minded man, didn't quite understand this sudden interest in him and his friends. Suspecting that a lecture on the evils of door-bell ringing and the like might be introduced under the camouflage of a detective story on the screen, he was non-committal with the rest of the crowd. He didn't propose that they'd have the laugh on him for

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falling into any such trap. So he qualified each and every invitation with, "There may be a lecture stuck away in it, but it's a detective story, an' there's sure to be refreshments."

That night, when the last reel showing the kid-gloved detective collaring the villain with one hand and uniting the hero and heroine with the other was run off before the delighted crowd of small boys in Walker's great parlors, Walker said: "Boys, in a few minutes we are going to have some refreshments, but before we do I want to say a few words."

"A few words" was ominous. Jimmy Whalen looked at Will Meeker. Nosey prayed away down in his guilty little heart that Walker was not going verbally to flagellate him and his wicked accomplices. His cap was in his pocket, and for strategic purposes he had located himself within leaping distance of the door. So far as his accessories, before and after the fact, were concerned, they might take care of themselves.

"Boys," Walker went on after a proper

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pause, "I'm going to organize a Junior Detective Society to-night to work for Uncle Sam."

The boys wriggled in their seats. Little curved backs straightened up, eyes sparkled. Seeing that his first words had gripped his audience, engaged their interest, Walker proceeded with his purpose.

"Boys, how many of you have got brothers in the trenches?" He counted the little hands that instantly shot up. "Seventeen, eighteen. Think of it, eighteen young men from this place, eighteen that you know of. Boys, did you know that there are certain persons right here in Danforth that are sending the Kaiser bullets to kill your brothers?"

The silence that followed indicated that they didn't know it.

Then up spoke Harry Nichols. "How can they send bullets to the Kaiser, Mr. Walker, when we can't even send tobacco to Sam?"

"That's a very natural question, Harry. I'll tell you how they do it." He paused. Then: "Boys, do you know why Jimmy

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Blakely, your friend and mine, was put in prison?"

"'Cause he ran away so he wouldn't have to fight," piped up Nosey.

"Do you know why he ran away?"

There was a silence.

"He ran away," with emphasis, "because he was bitten by a yellow dog. Did you ever see a yellow dog?"

"Hell's Half Acre's full of 'em," said Tom Brennan.

"Did you ever see a yellow dog that was a thoroughbred?" Walker went on.

"No—they're only yellow dogs," Nosey sneered.

The question was quite absurd.

"You all know what happens to a thoroughbred when he associates with a yellow dog, don't you?"

"My bull pup caught the mange from Nick Hamilton's mongrel," said Jimmy Whalen.

"Yes, and your bull pup gave it to my setter," exclaimed Snowy Johnson.

"That's the way it spreads!" exclaimed Walker.

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"But, Mr. Walker, what has yellow dogs got to do with the detective business?" said Nosey.

"Just this. The kind of yellow dog that bit Jimmy Blakely was a two-legged yellow dog."

There was a quick laugh of comprehension.

"Boys," Walker went on, solemnly, "this town is in danger from yellow dogs. Remember, there are only two kinds of Americans in this country, true Americans and yellow dogs. The true American is heart and soul for the U. S. A. The yellow dog is first aid to the Kaiser."

"But the bullets—how do they get bullets to the Kaiser to shoot our brothers?" persisted Harry Nichols.

"Those boys at the Front expect other boys to come over there and help them fight, don't they?" said Walker.

Chorus of all but Harry, who thought his question was being evaded, "Yes, sir."

"What's the matter with you, Harry, can't you ketch on or do you just want

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argument?" whispered Nosey. "I'll give you a punch in the nose."

"Aw, I only want to know," shot back Harry.

Then Walker told the boys why Jimmy Blakely ran away. "You see, boys"—he held up an accentuating finger—"the Kaiser's friends here did that so Jimmy couldn't go over and help his brother fight. They killed him off over here. That's the way the yellow dogs send the Kaiser bullets, Harry."

The boys nodded to one another comprehendingly.

Walker turned to Nosey. "Now, the only way to run the yellow dog down is to be a good detective. Nose him out. Swat him. Let me describe the yellow dog definitely. Then you boys can spot him when you see him. Any man that says anything against the Government that he can't back up is a yellow dog. There are two kinds, the noisy and the silent. Any one can spot the first the moment he opens his mouth. Some of them yelp, but most of them whine.

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"The yellow dog of the yelping species always yelps his glee at any news against the Allies, with an 'I told you so,' 'We would go into it,' air. Do you know that variety, boys?"

A dozen hands shot up.

"Babbitt, the feller you swatted," cried Nosey White.

Walker grinned.

"The yellow dog of the whining species is always doubtful of winning, gloomy, talking long war, high taxes, afraid the Government 'll go broke—won't be able to pay off its bonds—coal twenty dollars a ton before we get through with it, food 'way up, and all that sort of thing.

"The yellow dog of the silent species is harder to recognize. He doesn't commit himself by howling or yelping. He's the man who doesn't jump to his feet in a theater as if he were proud of the Star-Spangled Banner, or the man who doesn't applaud our boys when they march past or take off his hat to the flag. He's the fellow that eats meat on the sly on meatless days. Or he's the vulgar dog who

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ostentatiously feeds, not eats, in the cafés, when every expensive dish he orders is a slap in the face for Uncle Sam. When you see such a creature as that, eating meat on a meatless day, you can imagine your brother in the trenches going hungry to defend that man. Remind him that he's taking food out of your brother's mouth. Whenever you see him, kick him."

Walker held up a small yellow package. "I've got some cards of definitions here. I'm going to give you some. I want you to study them carefully and when a definition applies to any man you see you'll know he's a yellow dog. Spot him."

Walker passed the cards around.

"Now I suggest this: Call yourselves the Boy Detectives of America. Make every boy you know a detective to work for Uncle Sam to run down the yellow dog. I want you, Alexander White; and you, Harry Nichols; and you, Tom Brennan; and you, Jimmy Whalen; and you, Harold Wetherbee; and you, Phil

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Hammond, to take charge, organize. Do things your own way; use your own wits; only begin operations at once. Report to your leaders and they'll report to me.

"Now, boys, above all things, don't be afraid. Let everybody know you're on a yellow-dog hunt. If you hear a man say anything against the Government, you go right up and ask him:

"HOW DO YOU KNOW?"

Walker held up an emphasizing finger. "What a wonderful sentence that is, boys, 'HOW DO YOU KNOW?' It's a sharp rebuke to the loose-tongued man. It makes him pause, take heed, consider. It staggers the liar. It stops the tongue of the slanderer. It strikes deep at the root of everything that's false. The saints invented it to confuse the devil. Just put that question to any man who can't back up what he says and he'll be scared just as Babbitt was. He'll shift it to somebody else. You go to the man he shifts it to and ask him where he got it. Tell him your brother's in the trenches. It's your business to find out.

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He'll get scared. He, too, will pass you along to somebody else. Then you report to me."

Walker, in setting the small boy to fight yellow-dogism in Danforth, had reckoned somewhat without his host. He had forgotten that the small boy is very much of a fire-cracker; he's apt to go off with a bang after a very short preliminary sizzling. He is direct in his methods; he must see immediate results. Above all things, the small boy loves the trumpet and calcium route.

On the second night after the noteworthy moving-picture party Walker had retired to his library after dinner when he heard the distant strains of the most preposterous music. In astonishment he went out onto the front porch. He observed that his neighbors, as far as the eye could reach, were gathered on their front porches, too, looking down the street in the direction of the noise. Walker had once attended a Chinese theater and heard the musicians. He had been when a boy at a horning in the

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country, a thing blasphemously discordant. But this was neither Chinese band nor horning. It was too awful for either.

In the distance was a line of bobbing red torches and great squares of light. Walker wondered what the latter could be. Evidently the procession was coming his way. A sudden apprehension touched his supersensitive soul. On came the torches, swaying and bobbing. And now the great squares of light that had perplexed him proved to be illuminated banners. There was no applause from the onlookers on the stoops as the procession passed.

Walker's apprehension deepened as he noted that the shadowy figures bearing the torches and banners were diminutive. Presently he could read the first banner, which was borne by Nosey White:

BOY DETECTIVES OF AMERICA  
WE'RE OUT AFTER THE YELLOW DOG

If Walker hadn't known what was up, he would have suspected that some one

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had lost a mongrel pup and that the boys had adopted this preposterous way of finding it.

"It must be rather confusing to the neighbors, that first banner," he mused.

Walker was not prepared for the second banner, which the boys had been carrying somewhat askew, and now, as they approached his porch, squared around to face him. It was evidently designed for his edification and was a staggering blow to the super-modest Walker, who had hoped that the egotism of the boys would prompt them to arrogate to themselves all credit for the patriotic enterprise. The banner was proudly carried by Phil Hammond and Harold Wetherbee, sons of fellow-commuters, and bore in blazing letters:

ALBERT T. WALKER  
IS OUR BELOVED LEADER

Walker gripped the rail of the porch and breathed hard. On came the procession, made up of several groups, each bearing a banner. Walker noted that the

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inscriptions on the banners had been suggested by the card of definitions he had given the boys, and that they elucidated yellow-dogism in a most comprehensive and detailed way:

ALL YELLOW-DOGISM IS MADE IN GERMANY

THIS IS AN AMERICAN TOWN  
WE'RE BEHIND THE GOVERNMENT  
SWAT THE YELLOW DOG

WE'RE THE BOY DETECTIVES OF OUR TOWN  
THERE MAY BE YELLOW DOGS IN DANFORTH,  
BUT THERE AIN'T ANY YELLOW PUPS

THE YELLOW DOG MAY HAVE HIS DAY,  
BUT THIS AIN'T IT

IF A MAN TALKS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT  
AND CAN'T BACK UP WHAT HE SAYS  
HE'S A YELLOW DOG

THE MEANEST YELLOW DOG OF THE LOT IS  
THE ONE THAT STANDS BY AND HEARS  
HIS COUNTRY ABUSED WITHOUT  
PROTEST

FREE SPEECH, YES!  
FREE LIES, NO!

## **THE YELLOW DOG**

**WHICH WOULD YOU RATHER BELIEVE—  
UNCLE SAM OR THE KAISER?**

**ANY MAN WHO TELLS THE GOVERNMENT  
ABOUT ITS FAULTS AND HOW TO CORRECT  
EM IS ITS FRIEND**

**ANY MAN WHO TELLS THE GOVERNMENT  
ABOUT ITS FAULTS JUST TO  
DISCOURAGE IT  
IS A YELLOW DOG**

**ANYBODY THAT SAYS COLONEL VANDERBILT  
LOANED FRANCE FORTY MILLIONS  
IS A YELLOW DOG  
HE AIN'T GOT THAT MUCH**

**THE INCOME-TAX DODGER  
IS A YELLOW DOG**

**ANY MAN THAT WON'T BUY A BOND ISN'T  
WILLING TO PAY HIS SHARE OF THE  
EXPENSES OF OUR BROTHERS IN  
THE TRENCHES WHO ARE RISKING  
THEIR LIVES FIGHTING FOR  
HIM**

**CAN ANY YELLOW DOG BE YELLOWER 'N  
THAT?**

**ANYBODY THAT SAYS U. S. BONDS AIN'T  
THE SAFEST INVESTMENT IN THE WORLD  
ASK HIM HOW HE KNOWS  
IF HE CAN'T ANSWER YOU  
HE'S A YELLOW DOG**

## THE YELLOW DOG

EVERY CALAMITY-HOWLER  
IS A YELLOW DOG

ANY MAN THAT SAYS ANYTHING THAT GIVES  
THE GERMANS A CHANCE TO WRITE  
HOME AND SAY THIS AIN'T A POPULAR  
WAR

IS A YELLOW DOG  
IT'S POPULAR AN' THEN SOME!

IF YOU HEAR A MAN SAY HE'S GLAD THE  
TUSCANIA WAS SUNK  
DON'T ARGUE WITH HIM  
ASSAULT HIM!

ANYBODY WHO TALKS PEACE BY  
COMPROMISE  
IS A YELLOW DOG  
JUDAS MADE A 50-50 PEACE WITH THE DEVIL  
EVERYBODY KNOWS WHERE JUDAS GOT OFF

OUR BELOVED COUNTRY IS IN DANGER  
NOBODY BUT A YELLOW DOG WILL OBSTRUCT  
THE ANTI-YELLOW-DOG MOVEMENT  
IN DANFORTH

Presently came the following zoölogical  
anomaly:

EVERY SCARED CAT  
IS A YELLOW DOG!

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At the tail end of the procession came  
a huge banner overtopping all others, in-  
scribed as follows:

### OVER HERE

By

ALEXANDER (NOSEY) WHITE

While our boys are in the trenches  
Fighting muck and boche and stench  
Over there,  
He is loafing on park benches  
Over here,  
Talking queer,  
Yellow dog.

Or he sits in a saloon  
Over here,  
Drinking beer,  
An' he'll sneer  
At the boys that we hold dear,  
Yellow dog.

While the foemen we attack  
Over there,  
He would bite us in the back  
Over here.  
With his cash he'll be a miser,  
Won't buy bonds to beat the Kaiser,  
And he'll sneak, assault, and lie, sir,  
Yellow dog.

Yes, he'll yelp and whine and bellow,  
Will the dog that we call yellow,  
Over here.

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Plumb in front of Walker's gate, Nosey gave the word and the line of marchers halted. The combined strains of a tin fife, a mouth-organ, a jews'-harp, an accordion, and a snare-drum, each struggling with a patriotic air of its own—the drum coming the nearest to hitting it off—ceased. Then, "Right about! Face!" The Boy Detectives swung around. After a moment's pause Nosey shouted: "Three cheers for the Honorable Albert T. Walker, the Chief of the Boy Detectives of America!"

The cheers were given vigorously. Then from down the line came: "Speech! Speech!"

Walker noted that many of the neighbors had left their front porches and were sauntering down the walk toward his porch. It was a trying moment for him. The whole thing seemed grotesque. But when he looked into the enthusiastic faces of the boys the spirit of the thing swept over him. He stepped out into plain view, cleared his throat in a hollow way, and with the blood hot in his face

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and a new kind of life pulsing in him, shouted:

"Boys, I'm with you! You're all right! What you've got on your banners there is the right thing! Now go to it! Spot the yellow dog, then swat him! I'm proud to be your leader! Go to it!"

And the procession proceeded.

An hour later Chief of Police Kidder called on Walker. "We can't allow this, Mr. Walker," he said, "not for a minute."

"Have a cigar, Chief," said Walker. Then, when they had lighted up: "Can't allow *what?*"

"This noisy procession business."

"Why don't you stop 'em, then?"

"I came to you because," he chuckled, "you're their beloved leader."

Walker knew that he held an ace, but he let the chief go on. "Well?"

"You're aiding and abetting them."

Walker, in order to play his ace with more emphasis later on, adopted the conciliatory, "It's only boyish enthusiasm."

The chief became austere. "Nevertheless, they've got to stop it."

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"But why? The boys are out after yellow-dogism. It's a good thing they are."

"It's against the law to parade without a permit."

"Why don't you give 'em a permit?"

"To be frank, Mr. Walker, there are lots of law-abiding foreigners. Their feelings—"

Walker jumped to his feet. "To hell with their feelings! What about *our* feelings?"

"That's all very well for you, Mr. Walker, but I, as chief of police, am between the devil and the deep sea."

"So is Uncle Sam between the devil and the deep sea—he's got the enemy in front of him and a lot of white-livered skunks behind."

The chief didn't relish the insinuation. "Look here, Mr. Walker, I don't allow any man to tell me my—"

At this point Walker played his ace. "Read this card—paragraph four."

And paragraph 4 was: "Our beloved country is in danger from yellow-dogism."

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Nobody but a yellow dog will obstruct the anti-yellow-dog movement in Danforth."

"Well?" said the chief, roughly, "what of it?"

"You're a good policeman and—a good politician. Think it over."

The chief wagged his head. "Politics don't influence me. They've got to stop this business, that's all."

"That's all right, Chief," said Walker, pleasantly. "Have a fresh cigar."

The chief continued to puff the butt he held in his teeth, but he took the proffered fresh weed and stuck it in his waistcoat pocket. "Good night," he grunted.

"Good night, Chief."

"The color of his hide's beginning to turn," muttered Walker as he returned to the library.

On his way back to headquarters the chief noticed the approach of the Boy Detectives with their noise and torches. He turned to the right, made a detour through a dark street, and came out onto

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Main Street again far in the rear of the procession.

"Did you fix Walker, Chief?" said the captain.

"Oh yes. Walker explained it all. They're only some small boys out on a lark. That'll be all right. Don't get mixed up with it."

"I've a hunch that's the wisest course," said the captain.

"Boys," said Nosey White, when the procession was about to disband, "we're going to put Danforth on the map as a one-hundred-per-cent.-American burg!" Nosey had acquired a number of sound colloquialisms from the commuters who bought papers at his father's stand at the depot. Also he had learned the point of view of a number of those gentlemen through their comments on the news as they scanned the head-lines in the morning. Already in his patriotic little heart he had resented the attitude of many and had spotted the most prominent pessimists. With true juvenile perspicacity, he noticed that the loudest-mouthed pes-

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simists usually had a little ring of satellites or toadies whose principal business it was to acquiesce.

"Spot the main croaks, fellers," he admonished. "Get after 'em. Slip 'em the yellow card. If we can shut *them* up, the other fellers are 'easy. Another thing," he said, "always be polite—polite but firm. Don't tackle anybody in a noisy way, like a fresh Aleck trying to get into the spotlight; just go up quietly to a man when you hear him say anything mean about the Government and ask him:

"HOW DO YOU KNOW?"

"Say, that's a good slogan," said Harold Wetherbee. "'How do you know?'"

"It squares with the detective game, all right," said Nosey.

The first effect of the blatant torchlight procession with its suggestive banners was amusement. The Danforthers treated it flippantly. No one applied the definitions to himself. But each one could see how one of these banners fitted

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one or more of his neighbors. There was a good deal of friendly chaffing among the commuters next morning. Brown twitted Jones and Jones passed the buck to Robinson and Robinson pushed it along to Smith. Men began to ask one another in fun: "Are you a yellow dog?" "What heading do you come under? Tax-dodger? Scandal-monger? Passive listener?" Each began unconsciously to take stock of himself. He had long since begun to take stock of his neighbor. And as each one took stock of himself he grew more and more sensitive to flippant innuendo. Had some one taken stock of him, he wondered, as he had taken stock of his neighbor?

The income-liar admonition was the most general in its application. One had left off various items. Another had exaggerated his expense-account in a way that he felt the Government wouldn't be able to detect, but still was apprehensive. Still another had made the plea that he'd lost important data and would have to make a general statement.

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A. D. Jones was the first definite victim. Jones was a stock-speculator. "Bah!" he said, one evening at the newsstand—there had been a rise in the market and Jones was a chronic bear—"it's those dollar-a-year boys down in Washington. They're mixed up with McAdoo. They're all on the make."

Harold Wetherbee chanced to be standing by. He construed Jones's remark as an insinuation against the Government. So Jones was startled by a little piping voice at his elbow:

"How do you know?"

"Know *what?*" he said, looking down at his youthful cross-questioner.

"How do you know the Government's doin' it?"

"What do you mean?"

"My brother's in the trenches," said Harold, adhering literally to printed instructions.

"What's that got to do with it?" said Jones, amused.

Harold stuck out his chest. He had an audience and he was a natural-born smart

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Aleck. "It's my business to see the Government's run honest."

"Who says it *isn't* run honest?"

"*You* say so. If those dollar-a-year boys down in Washington is on the make that ain't honest, is it? That's why I want you to tell me how you know, so's I can report."

"Oh, forget it!"

"Not much I won't forget it," Harold went on, raising his voice.

"How do you know?"

"There, there! I *don't* know. Now you forget it."

Harold looked all around. Then: "Any man that says a thing against the Government he can't prove is a yellow dog."

Everybody within the sound of the Boy Detective's voice laughed right out at Jones.

"Ugh!" grunted Jones, disgustedly, picking up his paper and starting for home.

When Jones got home he found a yellow ticket in his side pocket. He was about to tear it up, but thought better of it.

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Instead, he read the definitions. "I'll pass this along to Reynolds; the third definition hits him." (Definition 3 was: "Any man who says the Government won't be able to meet the interest on its bonds is a yellow dog.") "That's his favorite song. I'll underline it."

Next morning Jones's voice was not so noticeable in the smoker. He pretended to be absorbed in the financial news. But that device didn't work. The whole commuter fraternity had been put wise overnight. Jones had the distinction of being the first yellow dog spotted in Danforth, and he was made to realize it. The question was hurled at him, "Hey, Jones, how do you know?" A roar of laughter.

Jones thought to take refuge in sulking. Then his tormentors took another tack.

"Say, Smith," said Robinson, "did you know that Wilson was boosting stocks just to squeeze the bears?"

"How do you know?" said Robinson, and all the boys laughed, keeping their eyes on Jones.

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All the way into town Jones sulked. But there was a curious reaction taking place in him, and he took a deep satisfaction in slipping the card he'd prepared in the side pocket of Reynolds's coat as he crowded past him at the ferry. Reynolds had been one of Jones's chief tormentors.

When Brigham, who was watching the blackboard at the opening, remarked, in a sympathetic tone, "McAdoo is still after the bears," Jones simply said, "Oh, rats!" and turned away. Brigham was amazed.

"What's the matter?" he exclaimed. "Everybody knows Washington's playing the market—Barney Baruch and Vanderlip."

"But *how* do they know?" said Jones.

"How do you know?" was the chorus that greeted Jones at the end of the smoker that evening, by all but Reynolds—for Reynolds himself was emerging from goathood into sheephood.

Jones hesitated, set his jaw hard, then said: "There's one thing I *do* know. I own Liberty Bonds." Jones had bought

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two that day. "And I know another thing. I made an absolutely correct statement about my income tax." Also Jones had amended his report that afternoon. "Did you fellows? Think it over!"

So many commuters were engaged in having fun at Jones's expense that they let down their own guard. Henry C. Beckwith at the soda-water stand in Smithers's drug-store on the corner of Lateret and Charles streets had the responsibility of spreading rumors brought home to *him*.

"I'm worried," he said. "I got inside information that the Germans have been picking out rotten timber for our airplanes."

"You don't say so!" said Billings, with a vacuous stare.

"I got it straight," said Beckwith, significantly. "It's—"

He was interrupted by a freckled, professorial-looking youth, Tom Brennan, who had in his hand a note-book and pencil, like a reporter in a play.

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"Mr. Beckwith," he said, pleasantly, "will you kindly tell me where you got your inside information?"

"What the—" Beckwith caught himself.

"Let me explain," said Tom. "My brother's in the trenches. It's my business to run down these rumors. If the Germans are doing that, the Government ought to know about it."

"But I can't say who told me."

"Pardon me," said Tom, producing a yellow card. "Will you kindly read paragraph eight?" Paragraph 8 was: "Any man who has inside information against the Government and won't tell where he got it so the Boy Detectives can run it down is a yellow dog."

"Say," Beckwith tried to bully, "you cut out that yellow-dog business around me."

"Sorry, but *we*" (the Boy Detectives had been told to use "we" for psychological reasons)—"*we* can't cut it out till you tell us who told *you*."

Beckwith pondered a bit, then, im-

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pulsively: "Look here, boy, you're right. I didn't have any inside information. It was only a rumor. I was a fool to talk that way. I'm just as good an American as you are."

Young Brennan nodded gravely. "You're right, Mr. Beckwith," he said. "And now I'll thank you for the yellow slip. It doesn't belong to you any more."

Phineas J. Brown was victim number three. Brown was a prominent oracle of gloom. Therefore he'd been spotted and followed assiduously, but thus far had escaped. It was Wednesday evening and Brown was radiating pessimism, as usual, in Ellis's cigar-store.

"Ugh!" he groaned. "There's no use in jollyng ourselves along with American resourcefulness, American courage, and all that. Boys, take it from me—"

"Look out!" said Binns, who had noted the figure of a small boy lurking outside the door. The warning came too late.

"Germany's invincible. Take it from me, she's invincible."

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Startled, Brown turned as a voice piped up: "The yellow slip for you, sir."

Brown glanced at the card the tiny fist poked into his hand. "What's the matter with you?" he growled. "These things don't cover *my* case." Then in a more conciliatory tone, for he had learned through the experience of others, and anxious to set himself right with the Boy Detective: "I've got bonds, and I don't lie about my income, and I don't eat meat on meatless days. Is there anything on that bill of fare hits me?"

A grimy little forefinger pointed to paragraph 12. Paragraph 12 was: "Any man that says good things about the enemy is a yellow dog."

The Boy Detective then turned to the long-haired gentleman, one E. A. Clark, who had been smiling acquiescently behind his whiskers at Brown's discomfiture. "Here's a card for you, sir," handing him a yellow slip.

"What for, you young pup? I haven't said anything."

The small grimy finger pointed to

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paragraph 15. Paragraph 15 was: "Any one who listens to a yellow dog giving aid to the enemy and doesn't protest is a yellow dog."

"You go about your business."

"It *is* my business, sir. My brother's in the trenches, and while the boche is fighting him in front, I'm going to keep the yellow dogs from jumping on his back."

Clark saw that he had made a mistake. "Of course you are! You're right." He turned to Brown. "Brown, you've got no business to talk that way, always spouting calamity. It isn't right."

"Here, Mr. Clark, gimme back that card—it don't belong to you now," said the Boy Detective. And he dashed away to his usual spotting-place near White's news-stand at the depot.

Without further ado Clark turned on the group. "Damn you yellow dogs," he said. "Damn you! You'll get us all into trouble with your whining."

Clark had taken up the cudgels for the Government. His little outburst in

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Ellis's cigar-store had effected a curious change in him just as a change had been effected in Walker. The Yankee coal in *him* was glowing. He had committed himself openly to the defense of Uncle Sam. He felt that his change of attitude would be noted. And it was next day, for news travels fast in commuterdome. No one came to him with any gleeful news of the sinking of a British tank steamer by a submarine, expecting him to listen passively. His attitude reacted again upon himself. He began to defend the Administration, argue for it. And as he did so he began to wonder why he had ever given credence to the foolish rumors that he'd heard.

R. W. Hicks, the big grocer of Danforth, who had become a prominent croak under the insidious influence of Charles Snyder, was made to see the light in a little more drastic way. Hicks's favorite croak was: "Why buy bonds? Half the money we pay in is being wasted and grafted." He had on a certain afternoon had his income tax figured out at

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the collector's office, which left him in a state of excessive grouch. On his way home he stopped in Ellis's cigar-store.

"Bah!" he observed, disgustedly, as he lighted a weed. "They're nothing but thieves down there, thieves and fools. Do you know, Ellis, that only fifty per cent. of what we pay in goes to lick the Kaiser? The rest of it is either grafted or wasted."

"How do you know?" said a tall youth (Snowy Johnson) with a white face and big black-rimmed spectacles, who entered the store at that moment. For, be it understood, the Boy Detectives had located the favorite forgathering place of the croaks and always lurked in the neighborhood thereof.

Hicks turned with a snarl, for he realized that he was in a hole and resolved to bluff it out. "How do I know? Why, of course I know! Look here! You Boy Detectives can't bully me."

"I don't want to bully you," said Snowy. "I only want to know."

"Everybody knows it's a fact."

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"If everybody knows it, how can the grafters get away with it?"

"Well, they do, all right," growled Hicks.

"It must be wonderful," Snowy commented, "for any *one* man to know as much as that, how half the money's being wasted and grafted."

"I know it and I believe it. You can't bully me, you young snoop."

Without another word Hicks strode off.

The next morning Hicks found pasted on the front of his store a number of yellow cards bearing the inscription: "This man is a yellow dog. He lies about the Government. He can't back up what he says."

"What do you think of it, Snyder?" he asked.

"Now's the time for all good citizens to stand together against the spying movement that this man Walker has started," Snyder urged, with a good show of indignation. "All your friends 'll back you up."

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"I'll be damned if I won't leave those cards up. They can't blackmail me," said Hicks, with a curious logic. "They can't shut my mouth. I'll show 'em."

But those cards *did* shut his mouth, for there was a perceptible falling off in trade during the day.

"What's this?" said Farmer Sloan, pointing to one of the yellow slips.

"One of those yellow-dog pups put it up there. They can't scare fellows like you and me."

"But what did you say?"

"I said that half the money that was realized on these bonds was grafted and wasted."

"Well," said Farmer Sloan, quietly, "my boys are in the trenches, two of 'em. I've put what money I could in bonds. The only way I can back my boys up is to back up the Government. I guess I don't care to trade with no man that lies about it. Good day."

"What do you think, Snyder?"

"That's only one," urged the book-keeper.

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But as the day wore on and customers began to ask, "How do you know?" and, when Hicks couldn't explain to their satisfaction just how the Government they loved was squandering half the money it got through grafting and the like, wouldn't buy goods, he lost confidence in Snyder's advice. He sent for the Boy Detective.

"Look here! You're right, boy," he said. "No man could know all that. Even Wilson himself couldn't know it."

"There's only one way you can counteract that rumor," said Snowy, the pedantic, "and that is to put up a sign that you have confidence the Government is doing the best it can."

It was a bitter pill, but Hicks swallowed it.

Walker had forgotten how resourceful the small boy really is, how effective his patriotism becomes, once given a chance to express itself along the line of adventure. He had thought to kindle a bonfire in Danforth. But he found that he'd started a conflagration. The air was full

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of it. Metaphorically, it smarted the eyes and stung the nostrils of everybody. It was not long before every yellow dog in Danforth had been served with a card of identification. A reign of terror had descended upon the place. It got so a man didn't dare to talk sedition even to his wife in the middle of the night in his own bed, lest from out the darkness come—like the far-famed clarion, Excelsior—the awful, incriminating:

“HOW DO YOU KNOW?”

The loyal little Boy Detectives didn't give their parents away, but they didn't hesitate to take them to task for anything that savored of sedition. *Paterfamilias* found that his redoubts of authority were crumbling before the constant, pin-prick fire of the

“HOW DO YOU KNOW?”

*Paterfamilias* hated it and became careful about what he said. He couldn't take refuge in the “Jones told me,” because he knew his boy would go and ask Jones. So *paterfamilias* began to think. He thought hard. In trying to convince

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himself that he was right he convinced himself that he was wrong. He began to realize that the Boy Detective movement was the concrete result of the careless words he and others had spoken; the shafts they thoughtlessly sent out against the Government had returned to torment them.

For a time everybody hated Walker—but nobody dared to criticize him openly for fear of stultifying himself. But, gradually, as the mental and moral attitude of Danforth began to change, sentiment shifted in Walker's favor and against the yellow dog. "How do you know?" had sunk into public consciousness. It began to be:

"HOW DO I KNOW?" and not once in a hundred times was a man able to answer that question to his own satisfaction.

Habitual kickers, who had thought it smart to voice their discontent, now spoke with bated breath and not without a glance around. Men who had themselves been accused began to listen

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for some one else to make a break so that they, too, could sneer:

"HOW DO YOU KNOW?"

Many who had been silent and surly now became vociferously patriotic. Others of the yellow-streaked variety went a step further. Instead of dilating apprehensively on German invincibility they began to see some good in their *own* country. Politicians, noting the change of the wind, began to fall into line, as all good politicians should. Congressman Millikin, who had been attempting the paradox of "hunting with the hounds and running with the hares," went back to Washington with very decided views, ready to face the devil in backing up the War Party.

Danforth was no longer compromising. Everybody was making a grand scramble to get aboard the Walker band-wagon. It was the only way to escape the pestiferous nagging of the Boy Detectives.

"Well, my friend," said Kreischer—alias Cummings—to Snyder a month later, "I told you this war was a matter

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of advanced psychology. Your Walker has found the key to the situation. He is a smart fellow. He didn't waste his efforts in trying to run down the sowers of the seed, who were as ubiquitous as the house-fly. No. He changed the nature of the soil, rendered it incompatible with the growth of the seed. He availed of the small boy, a force that was going to waste. He set him to work; spotted the yellow dogs; brought them into the light; made them stand up and be counted. Every one of them began to ask the why and wherefore of his own attitude, and when he did so his thought changed. And so the whole public thought changed."

"Shall I give up my job here and go back to town?" said Snyder.

"What's the use? There's nothing for us to do just now. This movement has spread. I have a letter from Meadville out in Pennsylvania. The boys out there have caught the contagion of applied patriotism, caught it from the boys here, through the big newspapers. They've stamped out yellow-dogism out there.

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And so they have in Williamstown, New York." Cummings held up a bunch of letters. "And so they have in Pittstown, New Jersey, and Danville, Kentucky, and Calais, Maine, and Beardstown, Illinois. Away out in Douglas, Arizona, they've caught on."

Cummings sighed. "I'm afraid Friend Walker and his Boy Detectives have turned the trick."

THE END







